



**U.S. Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Western District of Texas**

Johnny Sutton, U.S. Attorney

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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LEADER OF AUSTIN-BASED ALIEN SMUGGLING ORGANIZATION SENTENCED

United States Attorney Johnny Sutton announced today that Domingo Diaz-Resendez, leader of an Austin-based alien smuggling organization, was sentenced to 96 months in federal prison.

"Mr. Domingo Diaz-Resendez earned a lengthy stay in federal prison," stated United States Attorney Johnny Sutton. "This prosecution should serve as notice to the *coyotes* of our commitment to arrest, prosecute and imprison those involved in alien smuggling."

Also, co-defendant Orlando Mauricio Torres-Rojas was sentenced to 33 months in federal prison for his role as a guide/driver in the alien smuggling organization. In addition to the prison terms, United States District Judge Lee Yeakel ordered that Diaz-Resendez and Torres-Rojas be placed under supervised release for a period of three years after completing their prison terms.

On September 7, 2005, Diaz-Resendez pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy to smuggle, transport and harbor over 100 aliens, one count of harboring illegal aliens and one count of money laundering. Torres-Rojas pleaded guilty on the same day to one count of conspiracy to smuggle, transport and harbor over 100 aliens plus one count of harboring illegal aliens.

On April 23, 2005, federal and local law enforcement officers arrested Diaz-Resendez, Torres-Rojas and Carlos Alfonso Montoya-Perez. At the time of arrest, the defendants had just transported at least 17 illegal aliens to a mobile home located at 7097(B) FM 973 in Travis County. The illegal aliens—from El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Mexico—informed authorities that they each paid between \$1,500-2,000 to be smuggled into the United States from Mexico near Eagle Pass or Laredo. In addition, the investigation revealed that Diaz-Resendez and others were on the receiving end of an estimated \$188,000 in wire transfers representing smuggling fees. The United States is currently seeking the forfeiture of proceeds derived from the smuggling activity including the property located at 503 Los Vista in Leander, Texas, and a monetary judgement of \$188,451.80.

Carlos Alfonso Montoya-Perez, who pleaded guilty to one count of harboring illegal aliens on September 15, 2005, is scheduled to be sentenced on December 1, 2005. He faces up to 10 years in federal prison. Manuel Hernandez-Perez and Eliazar Guel-Perez, two additional co-defendants in this case, are fugitives.

This case was investigated by the United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Internal Revenue Service-Criminal Investigation, Austin Police Department and the Travis County Sheriff's Office. Assistant United States Attorney Gerald C. Carruth is prosecuting this case on behalf of the Government.

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